

English Section



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DAYS COMMEMORATING HISTORICAL EVENTS

(16th January to 15th February)

16 January	Sri Guru Har Rai Sahib was born at Kiratpur Sahib. (16-1-1630)
17 January	The Govt. accepted Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee as the new name of Central Management Board. (17.1.1927)
18 January	Sher Singh (younger son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh) installed as Maharaja. (18.1.1841)
19 January	The Keys Agitation won by the Sikhs. The Governement handed over the keys to the Sikhs. (19.1.1922)
22 January	Delhi court awarded death sentence to Bhai Satwant Singh, Bhai Kehar Singh and Balbir Singh (In Indira Gandhi murder case). (22.1.1986)
24 January	129 members of SGPC and over one lac Sikhs took a vow before Akal Takht Sahib to lay their lives for Punjabi Suba. (24.1.1960)
25 January	Sikh Jatha reached Tarn Taran Sahib. The hired men of Mahant attacked the Sikhs. Several Sikh including Bhai Hazara Singh and Bhai Hukam Singh seriously wounded. (25.1.1921)
26 January	Baba Deep Singh Shaheed born in Pahuwind (Amritsar). (26-1-1682)
30 January	Martydom of Bhai Haqiqat Rai. (30.1.1742)
31 January	Ban on the Sikh sword withdrawn. A notification declared that Kirpan was not a weapon. (31.1.1936)
10 February	Anglo Sikh battle at Sabhraon. The Sikhs lost the battle due to treason of Lal Sinh, Teja Sinh and Gulab Sinh Dogra. Martydom of Sardar Sham Singh Attariwala. (10.2.1846)
15 February	Akali Dal swept the SGPC elections. (15.2.1939)



In continuation with the last edition:

SRI GURU TEGH BAHADUR SAHIB JI (1621-1675)

-S. Surjit Singh 'Gandhi'

**We are taking pleasure while publishing these contents from the book
'History of the Sikh Gurus' by S. Surjit Singh Gandhi former Head of Sikh
History Research Board (SGPC).**

Eight days in kotwali

During the eight days in Delhi Kotwali different types of tortures were inflicted on the Guru Ji. On the first day of the Guru Sahib's arrival at Delhi that is to say, on Thursday, Qazi Abdul Wahaab Vora offered the Guru Ji three alternatives viz: (i) To show miracles, or (ii) to embrace Islam, or (iii) to prepare himself to court death. He refused to show miracles as it was contrary to Sikh faith. He also refused to accept Islam. He, however, chose the last alternative. On Friday and Saturday, the attempts were made to persuade the Guru Ji to show miracles or accept Islam. Persuasions having failed, coercion was employed to make the Guru Ji agree to one of the two alternatives. During the next four days, the Guru Ji was subjected to severest tortures: burning sand was poured on his body; he was not allowed to drink water. Thursday, the 11th November, 1676 was the fateful day. The Guru Sahib's three dearest disciples and companions Mati Das, Dayal Das and Sati Das were persecuted to death. Bhai Mati Das was tied to two poles and torn asunder. Bhai Dayal Das was boiled alive to death in a cauldron of hot water and Sati Das was roasted alive with cotton wrapped round his body. Even this could not shake the Guru.

When the authorities saw that the Guru Ji was adamant and impeccable, they ordered the executioner Jalal-ud-din of Samana to sever the head from the body. In a split of second, it was done. According to Muhammad Ahsan Ijad "When brought to the court (at Delhi), he (Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji) refused to become Muhammadan and was executed." In the words of the contemporary scholar Munsh Surjan Rai Bhandari of Batala, the author of the *Khulasat-ut- Twarikh*, completed in 1697 "Within twenty-two years of the great event Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji having been kept in prison by the Ameer of the kingdom was executed under the orders of the Emperor Alamgir in 1086 (al-Hijri, corresponding to the 17th Alamgiri) (Nov. 11, 1675 A.D.).

As per order of the Government the Guru Sahib's body was to be quartered and exposed to public view, obviously to impart stern warning to all such people as dared to go against the wishes and orders of the Emperor. But because of agility and timely action of Sikhs, this could not be done. According to Bansavali Nama;¹ a furious storm raged immediately after this brutal deed was accomplished. In the confusion caused by it, a man, named Jaita, the resident of Dilwali Gate Delhi, dashed out of the crowd and instantaneously disappeared with the holy head of the Guru Ji. He shared his secret with his neighbour Bhai Nanu, the son of Bhai Bagha, Bhai Uda the resident of Ladwa was also taken into confidence. All the three decided to take the Guru Sahib's head to Anandpur. They placed the holy head in a basket which was covered over carefully and started their journey to their destination. They made five halts on the way. Their first halt was at Bagpat, the second at Karnal, the third at Anaj Mandi (Sis Ganj Ambala), the fourth at Nabha Sahib (near Chandigarh) and the fifth at Kiratpur. They left Delhi early in the morning of the 13th November and reached Kiratpur on the 15th November, 1675. From there the head was taken to Anandpur with full honour and cremated there with proper ceremonies² on the 16th November, 1675. Gurdwara Sis Ganj marks the place where the hallowed head was cremated.

When Lakhi Shah Lubana³ who was a famous contractor of Delhi and had a deep faith in the Guru Ji was informed of the martyrdom of the Guru Ji by Uda Singh, he felt much concerned. Bhai Uda and Lakhi Shah made a plan to get hold of the sacred body. Lakhi Shah, being a renowned contractor, was well known among Muslim officials and did not arouse suspicion of any kind. He emptied his carts laden with lime near the Red fort and went in retreat to his home in village Rakabganj.

On the way, taking advantage of the darkness and the carelessness of the Mughal sentries, Lakhi Shah, helped by his sons, Nagahiya, Hema and Harhi, and Dhuma son of Kanha whisked the sacred body away on Maghar Sudi 6, 1732 Bikram, November 12, 1675 in one of their carts to their home.

Apprehensive of the Government reprisal, Lakhi Shah and his sons then built up a pyre inside their house and set fire to it the same evening. A little after dark, it is said, that a police party did arrive at the scene in search of the body, but finding the house consigned to flames and the inmates weeping bitterly, returned. After the cremation was over, the ashes were collected and put in a metal vessel called 'gagar' and buried on the spot.

IMPORTANCE OF MARTYRDOM

No possibility of honourable settlement

The Ninth Guru Sahib's martyrdom had far-reaching consequences. The Guru

Sahib's was a bid, more conscious than powerful. which was made to instil among the aggrieved the spirit of manliness to rise against their oppressors. No doubt. no immediate success was possible, but the heroic manner the Guru Ji sacrificed his life, blazed a new trail in so far as it was a commitment to an open struggle against the organised oppression of the state. The execution eliminated, possibility, if any, of an honourable settlement with the Imperial Government. After that, it was clear that unless the Sikhs were prepared to go under, they had to wage a struggle against the aggressive fanaticism and oppressive administration of the Mughals under Aurangzeb. The first course of going under was ruled out. almost instinctively, by the kind of training the community had received in the past. Selecting the second course as the only one compatible with the honour and mission of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and his successors, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji plunged himself into the preparatory measures for the inevitable struggle of the future. In this context, various vital concepts were streamlined, elaborated and concretised. The organisation of the Sikhs too underwent great changes. The idea of Dharmyudh which was implicit was made explicit and a complete theory of struggle (Dharam-yudh) was evolved with a view to explaining its aims and boosting the morale of the participants.

Organizational Changes Idea of 'Dharam Yudh'

Inflamed the right thinking persons

Whereas Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib's martyrdom marks the high water mark of the determination of the Guru Ji to suffer for his lofty aims, it exposed the barbarious character of the Sunnie state headed by the Sunnie Muhamedans. Its obvious result was that the Guru Sahib's sacrifice inflamed all right-thinking persons. Gokal Chand Narang writes, "In his death, the Guru Ji surpassed anything that he had done in his life. He was known through-out upper India, was highly revered by Rajput princes, and was actually worshipped by the peasantry of the Punjab. His execution was universally regarded by the Hindus as a sacri-fice."

Notes and References

1. Samvat sataran Patti Maghar Sudi Panjmi Aahei Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji uth gei Dargahei, Tis Din Andheri, Gardh Gubari Rahi. (Bansavali Nama)
2. Bhat vahi Multani Sindhi (Punjabi University, Patiala).
3. Bhat Vahi Jado Bansian Khata .Barhtion Kanoton ka. Lakhiya beta Godhuka, Nagahiya Hema Harhi bete Lakhiya ke Barhtiya Kanaunr Naik Dhuma beta Kanhe ke Bijlaut Guru Tegh Bahadur ji Mehl Naven ki loth uthae Lae, Sal Satrai Sai Battis Mangsar Sudi Chhat Shukarwar ko Dag diya Aadh Ghari Rahti.

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